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THE GREAT CONFERENCE OBSESSION

By WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

IT IS AN ARTICLE of faith with internationalists, one-worlders, anti-anti-communists and assorted do-gooders that there is some peculiar, almost mystical merit in sitting down around a conference table with communists. So it is not surprising to find in the recent anti-anti-communist pronouncement of the General Council of the Presbyterian Church (which has been repudiated by many individual Presbyterians and churches) this gratuitous advice to the American people:

"Always to be ready to meet around a conference table with the rulers of Communist countries . . .

"To employ the conference method to the full in the settling of disputes with our country's enemies . . .

"To take the initiative in seeking face-to-face encounter with our enemies." . . .

And the surest sign of softness toward communism in a British or French politician is the plea for "just one more trial" for agreement with the Kremlin on a "give-and-take basis". The unspoken idea is always that in the distribution of labor the West must always do the giving and the Kremlin must always do the taking.

But all past experience and every law of historical probability indicate that a conference with Communists, whether of the Soviet or Chinese brand, is a snare and a pitfall, to be avoided if possible and to be wound up expeditiously with a decisive showdown, if the meeting becomes unavoidable. Can the sentimental pleaders for the "conference method" point to one, just one, positive advantage that has accrued to this country from the innumerable meetings, big and small, bilateral and multilateral, that have taken place between American and Soviet representatives during the last twenty years? As Al Smith liked to say, let's look at the record.

IT WAS A GREAT GAIN for Soviet international prestige when Franklin D. Roosevelt extended diplomatic recognition in November, 1933. But the President failed to exact the price which a firmer and more astute negotiator would certainly have required: suppression of the activities of the Communist International on American territory and compensation to Americans for stolen property and repudiated debts.

At the first "Big Three" wartime conference in Teheran, Roosevelt was so busy trying to coax a smile out of Stalin (for this incredibly childish episode see Frances Perkins,

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'The Roosevelt I Knew') that he turned a blind eye while Churchill was agreeing with Stalin that the eastern half of Poland should be annexed by the Soviet Union.

The second "Big Three" Conference in Yalta, in February 1945, was the greatest moral and diplomatic disaster in American history and may justly be considered the Pandora Box, from which most of our present day troubles have emerged. It is gratifying that Secretary Dulles (who last year sponsored a feeble and lukewarm resolution on Yalta and Potsdam, which was happily shelved on the instance of Senator Taft) found adequately vigorous language with which to characterize the Yalta decisions at the fatuous Berlin conference now terminating. He referred to such points in the Yalta Agreement as the dismemberment of Germany, the confiscation of all German assets abroad and the impressment of German labor for "reparations" as "cruel decisions", incompatible with the spirit of the present time.

There was considerably more in the Yalta Agreement which could properly have been denounced. The unnatural and unjust frontiers prescribed for Poland and for Germany, the refusal of asylum to Soviet political refugees, the sell-out of Nationalist China by turning over Manchuria to Soviet control were all part of the Yalta deal, by all odds the worst international agreement ever concluded by an American Government. This is true whether one takes as a standard of judgment American national interests or moral principles which should be binding on all civilized nations.

Potsdam carried on what Yalta began and sanctioned an act of vindictive cruelty which does not find a parallel even in the Treaty of Westphalia after the ruthless Thirty Years War. The "Big Three" at Potsdam put the seal of their approval on the expulsion without property or compensation of some thirteen million Germans and people of German origin from the eastern provinces of Germany and from the countries of central and southeastern Europe. It was one of the provisions of the Treaty of Westphalia, concluded three centuries earlier, that Protestants who chose to leave a Catholic state, or Catholics who preferred to move from a Protestant state, were entitled to take with them whatever property they might possess, or its equivalent in value.

The post war conferences with Molotov and other Soviet representatives were not as disastrous as Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam, because by this time American public opinion was in strong revolt against any more appeasement, any more one-sided concessions. But, again, as one looks back, it is impossible to find any positive achievement as a result of these efforts to reach a meeting of minds around the conference table. The alternative to surrender was always deadlock.

OUR GREATEST SUCCESSES were always won not by negotiation, but by acting independently and unilaterally. So long as we tried to reach an agreement with Moscow about Germany, West Germany languished politically and stagnated economically. When even General Marshall, then Secretary of State, could no longer put up with Soviet stall-

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ing and obstruction, after the two full-dress conferences in Moscow and London in 1947, we started to restore West Germany independently, and with remarkable success; the Berlin "airlift" did more to raise American prestige and lower the Kremlin's than any conference ever held. This was also true as regards our decision to restore Greece and support Turkey.

The United States enters any international conference with a Communist power under several handicaps. First, such a conference always arouses the hope, in gullible quarters, that the end of the cold war is just around the corner and produces exhortations from the wishful thinkers and anti-anti-Communists not to be inflexible, to yield a bit here and a bit there; in other words, to get back to the good old Yalta spirit. Molotov is not handicapped by any such appeals on his side.

Second, the Soviet Union is a monolithic single power, while the United States is the head of a shaky coalition. Molotov can maneuver with complete freedom, shift tactics overnight, blow hot one day and cold the next; no moralities, no rules of the game inhibit him. Dulles, on the other hand, must clear his position with Eden and Bidault; Eden and Bidault, in turn, are under the pressure of their parliaments, press and public opinion.

To be sure, the surface teamwork at Berlin was good. British Foreign Secretary Eden stated the Western case for free elections in Germany and French Foreign Minister Bidault upheld the European Defense Community. But one still does not know whether the hopelessly divided and faction-ridden French Chamber of Deputies will eventually back up Bidault by ratifying the EDC.

Molotov played not to the other participants in the conference, whom he could not hope to convince, but to fellow-traveller, neutralist and defeatist public opinion, which is unfortunately strong in Western Europe, especially in France and Italy. In quick succession he dangled before this sector of public opinion, so eager to be deceived, a series of dazzling, although distinctly phony prospects.

He has held up in his showcase the hint of an end of the war in Indo-China, if only Red China is admitted to the UN; also a disarmament conference to ban the atomic weapons in which the Soviet Union is at a disadvantage; increased trade behind the Iron Curtain; also the prospect of a pacific, friendly Soviet Union cooperating with France to sit on the neck of Germany indefinitely. These are all appealing displays, but what's behind them?

What has been the effect of these propaganda diatribes? That will be cleared by the current of events. But any conference of this kind gives the Soviet participants a superb opportunity to play off one member of the opposing coalition against another, to inflame every subject of difference between the United States, on one side, and Great Britain and France, on the other, to plant seeds of hope here and of suspicion there and to sow apples of discord all over the place.

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NOTHING COULD BE LESS probable than a retreat by the Soviet Union under the klieg lights of an international conference. Such a retreat is only conceivable under the pressure of superior power and would be carried out with as much face-saving camouflage and secrecy as possible. It is one of the ABCs of diplomatic history that success in a conference is only possible when there is substantial agreement in advance as to what the terms of settlement are to be. It is not on record that any such agreement preceded the Berlin conference.

It is childishly naive to expect that reasonable discussion will convince or convert the hardboiled representative of a predatory dictatorship. Anyone who took the trouble to read the Soviet notes and statements on the German question which preceded the Berlin meeting could have predicted, almost to the last comma and adjective, what Molotov would say. Perhaps it was of some value, especially for German public opinion, to make the Soviet Foreign Minister spell out clearly for the official record his scheme for turning Germany into another "people's democracy". Against this advantage, however, must be set the opportunities for dissension and delay which every such conference gives to the cunning and devious masters of Soviet diplomacy.

Perhaps the Berlin conference had to be held, if only to satisfy French and British public opinion. But there should at long last be an emphatic moratorium on the cry, "Just one more trial". After Berlin there should be a final showdown. Either Germany must be effectively armed or we should refuse to underwrite the ground defense of Europe.

And we have everything to lose and nothing to gain from talks with the Chinese Communists, with or without their Soviet senior partners. There is no more chance that Red China would evacuate North Korea than there is that the Soviet Union would voluntarily give up the Soviet Zone in Germany. There is no need for a conference to establish the existing division of Korea. And what else can we discuss to advantage? A sell-out of Syngman Rhee or Chiang Kai-shek? Admission of Red China to the UN and diplomatic recognition by the United States? That would be reverting to Yalta, and American public opinion, one hopes, will never stand for that.

Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes had a short way of dealing with Communist deceit and intrigue. Urged by Moscow to discuss terms of recognition, Mr. Hughes curtly replied that there was nothing to discuss. If the Soviet Government wanted to stop subversive propaganda and pay for stolen property it could do so, without any conference. Mr. Hughes set a good model for American statesmen today.

William Henry Chamberlin, a frequent contributor to HUMAN EVENTS, is the author of a number of books on foreign politics. His latest, *Beyond Containment,* was published last fall by the Henry Regnery Company, 20 West Jackson Blvd., Chicago, Illinois. Price — $5.00.

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The Cry-Baby Affair: Nothing in the annals of political science can equal the extraordinary spectacle of top-level Democrats beseeching the head of the GOP to make Republican orators slack down on their quite correct charges that the Democratic Party represented "twenty years of treason". All sound observers here agree that this unprecedented appeal sprang from stark fear haunting the chiefs of the Opposition.

The fact is that these "Fear Dealers" (the most Republican thing that the controversial Governor Sherman Adams has ever said) cannot escape from one black apprehension — that Senator McCarthy and his indictments of Communists in Government past and present may well prevent a Democratic comeback in next fall's elections.

The unpublished news is that the Democratic leaders have reportedly received word of a project under consideration by powerful Americans in the East — a plan which if properly executed might destroy the Democratic Party at its very core — Northern and Eastern industrial constituencies. The talk (as we gathered it last weekend in New York) is that an organization may be formed, composed of leading Democrats and Independent Republicans to further the McCarthy course. One suggestion is a committee entitled "Democrats for McCarthy"; others believe it should have a broader title and wider scope, appealing to independent Republican voters and Jeffersonian Democrats who followed Ike last year.

The professional politicos realize the fell effects of such an organization, if well conducted, on the voting in the large Northern industrial and big-city states where for twenty years the Democratic party had (until 1952) lorded it over Republicans. Those twenty years are what Samuel Lubell in his epochal book *The Future of American Politics* called the "Third American Revolution", the shift of recent immigrants and their children away from the GOP to the Democrats.

Hence the almost incredible "cry-baby" tactics of former Democratic Speaker of the House Rayburn and others who not so long ago did not spare "smears" when orating about Republicans. Veteran observers here recall the Roosevelt statement in the 1936 campaign when he called Hoover, Landon and their friends "enemies of the nation as powerful as those which faced the country in the War of Independence".

Bricker Battle: As we go to press the Administration is pushing hard for a speedy vote on the Bricker proposal because of mounting public sentiment behind it. But the White House is playing politics and so observers, in case Bricker loses, are canvassing three possibilities: ONE — the Senate may pass a wholly ineffective amendment which may be drastically revised in the House. TWO — the Senate will pass no amendment at all. The House may then write its own amendment and with popular support may force the Senate into line. THREE — neither Senate nor House will pass any amendment or pass one unacceptable to Senator Bricker and the Bar Association. In either case Bricker will be in a good position to carry the fight to the people.

Here follows a picture of the background of the critical events on the floor of the Senate. Last week a near panic developed among the supporters of the Bricker Amendment when it was discovered that

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the draft prepared by the ablest constitutional lawyers of the American Bar Association and overwhelmingly approved by the Association's House of Delegates had been revised by the Ohio Senator after consultations with political advisers on Capitol Hill.

Only quick and effective action by Frank Holman, former President of the Bar Association and the top legal adviser to the Senator checked the generating pessimism. Stepping into the breach, he assured the panicky that the revised text was not a surrender but a long step in the right direction. He unquestionably headed off charges that ultimately Senator Bricker would weaken and consent to a watered down, ineffective version of the Bar Association's original draft.

Bricker agreed to revision because political advisers convinced him that it would be impossible to get his amendment through the Senate with the "which clause" — that if he insisted on the clause the amendment might be disastrously defeated. He was advised to take less than the "which clause" in the hope that if he could get the amendment by the Senate, the House might restore the clause, and that, by the time the Bill went to House and Senate Conferees public opinion would have become so strong as to overwhelm the Senate and to achieve a complete victory. It was emphasized that no action by the present Congress, with the danger that a New Dealish Congress might be elected in the Fall, would leave the door wide open for the internationalists to commit the United States to some form of world government through the treaty power.

The "which clause" did a 100% job of protecting the Constitution from mutilation by treaties or executive agreements. The revised Bricker text gives less protection to the Constitution. How much less is the question.

Some eminent constitutional lawyers say that under it, treaties or executive agreements could still trim down States Rights. But all agree that on vital constitutional issues — such as, free speech, freedom of religion or of the press or surrender of American sovereignty to an international body — the revised text would prevent either treaties or executive agreements from thus demolishing the Constitution.

Although preferring the absolute certainty of the "which clause" they concede that the gains under the revised text of the Ohio Senator are large. At present the Constitution is exposed to complete mutilation by treaties ratified by only two-thirds of Senators present on the floor of the Senate and voting or by executive agreements which can bypass the Senate.

The revised Bricker text sharply tightens up the procedure for ratification of treaties and compels executive agreements also to be submitted for ratification where domestic law is affected. It also inserts judicial curbs expected to stop any attempted use of treaties or executive agreements to make fundamental alterations in the Constitution.

Not Merely Gossip: When Frank Holman, leader in the fight for the Bricker Amendment, last came to Washington, he paid a visit to John L. Lewis, head of the United Mine Workers. The visit lasted three hours. Two guesses as to what they talked about. Anyhow, so rumor goes, the next day Holman received a check in four figures from Lewis to be used for spreading the gospel of the Bricker Amendment.

● Those scouting for new surprise legislation likely to occur on Capitol Hill say that Senator Dirksen of Illinois may soon push for repeal or drastic revision of the "Trading with the Enemy Act" and liquidation of the Office of Alien Property Custodian. This is the "Morgenthau Plan" for which the Soviet agent Harry Dexter White was responsible as part of his "tough peace with Germany" policy. The private property of German persons and corporations was ruthlessly confiscated, injuring not only Nazi, but also anti-Nazi Germans, and thus working great harm to the principle of private property. Now there is a prospect for the U.S. Government settling all just German claims in the not too distant future.

● In the past 48 hours, President Eisenhower has acted graciously and justly in naming Col. Charles Lindbergh as a general in the Air Force Reserve. Those who now profess such hysterical worry

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about "smearing" forget the famous flyer — one of the finest individuals to pass across the American scene in this generation — was hounded by internationalist elements back in the days before we got into World War II. One New York organization actually put out a promotion circular offering, for a donation, to "destroy" Col. Lindbergh's character. They failed, of course, but it took many years before the flier was given his just honors. One thing is little known about Lindbergh in this phase. Smeared by internationalists as an "isolationist", he was never that, at least in the smear sense the term was used. We had a private talk with Lindbergh in November, 1940, when he was a leader in the America First movement. He insisted that he was not an "isolationist" as charged and that his support of America First was aimed at saving Europe by keeping the U.S. out of the war. For, U.S. intervention would upset the European balance of power and destroy Germany, thereby enabling Red Russia to move westward. The possibility he feared most, he said, was the Soviet Russian threat to the survival of Europe and civilization. Time has proved how right he was.

Harvard Hogs Headlines: One conception of a modern miracle is for someone — just someone — at Harvard to publicly administer even a mild rebuke to the Communist menace in America. Latest Harvard solon to give intellectual aid and comfort to the "liberals" is Dean Erwin N. Griswold of the Harvard Law School — a place apparently filled with scholarly souls who are sleepless of nights for fear that the Bill of Rights will not give sufficient legal protection to liberty-loving Communists. It seems that Senator McCarthy has been blasting away at the University for its failure to dismiss a professor who invoked the Fifth Amendment. So Dean Griswold appoints himself legal knight errant to challenge the justice of firing a teacher who hides behind the Fifth Amendment. We had thought that this matter had been settled on the score of common sense and eminent legal opinion — but no one can tell what a Harvard pundit may do where the issue is Communism. Anyway, the good Dean made heavy headlines in the *Daily Worker* with his pro-communist position.

Why shouldn't a teacher be dismissed who — when asked before a congressional committee whether he is at present a Communist, or has ever been a member of the party — jumps behind the Fifth Amendment? Certainly — it's just elementary common-sense that if he were innocent, he would be happy to say "no". Failure to answer strongly suggests that he is or has been a Communist.

But there is very high legal opinion to back up common sense in this matter. While Trygve Lie was Secretary General of the United Nations, a Senate committee ran into a flock of American employees of UN who invoked the Fifth Amendment when asked about their connections with the Communist Party. Lie suspended those refusing to answer and appointed a panel of distinguished lawyers to determine their fate. The panel consisted of an eminent lawyer from England, one from Belgium and a former Attorney General of the United States, William Mitchell, one of our greatest lawyers.

This panel unanimously advised Lie to fire the American employees who had hidden behind the Fifth Amendment. Without any hesitation, the three lawyers said: "If an officer of the United Nations pleads privilege [i.e., the Fifth Amendment] to questions whether the officer concerned is, or has been, a member of the communist party, the duty of the Secretary-General is clear. In our opinion, such an officer is just as unsuitable for continued employment by the United Nations in the United States as one who has *actually been convicted*, and his employment in the United Nations should not be continued."

Boondoggling: Some Republicans in Washington are walking so faithfully in the footsteps of the New Deal that they are even trying to revive its indisputable failures. Senator Margaret Chase Smith (species of woman for better government) and her other colleague in the Senate from Maine (Payne) were able to get the upper House to approve unanimously a three million dollar study of the Passamaquoddy tidal power project. The approval was by voice vote so that no Senator could be recorded as voting for this ancient boondoggle. And both Senators Smith and Payne traded their votes for the St. Lawrence Seaway project to obtain the Passamaquoddy handout. The Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, in order to get the Maine Senators to switch their votes on the St. Lawrence Administration measure from

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"nay" to "yea", hurriedly approved the Passamaquoddy grant of three million and reported to the Senate that "the continuing power shortage in New England made it important to explore means of increasing the electric generating capacity of the 'area'."

Private power authorities say that there is no power shortage in New England — absolutely none — and that private companies will provide all the increased power that the people of New England can soundly pay for. But what the Maine Senators obviously want is a New England TVA set-up with cheaper rates provided by annual Federal subsidies — more of the genuine socialism of TVA.

Passamaquoddy was one of the three biggest boondoggles proposed by the first Roosevelt Administration from 1933-37. The Florida Ship Canal after the expenditure of millions, was abandoned when Floridians learned that the digging of the canal would expose the underground water supply of the State to contamination from the salt waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. The Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis was unbelievably wasteful. St. Louis boondogglers tore down some 37 blocks of business buildings on the waterfront — a business area which furnished jobs to thousands of workers, but the memorial has never been completed.

Passamaquoddy, from the time of its proposal, was pronounced by competent engineers to be utterly unfeasible. Nevertheless, Congress put up some seven millions. The money was largely spent on creating a community of workers' houses which not so long ago the government sold to a contractor, the government realizing less than a penny on every dollar expended. It is apparently hard to lay a ghost of New Deal extravagance and socialism — for there is the lady from Maine and her junior colleague in the Senate under the Republican label hot-footing it after even a thoroughly discredited bit of Roosevelt boondoggling.

Economic Notes: Now it is the "right to move" that is under question. For six months the hatters' union has been on strike to compel the Hat Corporation of America to stay in South Norwalk, Conn. The corporation has been shifting its operations to other parts of the country. Last week the American Federation of Labor decided to take a hand in this strike against "runaway" capital.

The principle involved is the right of capital to move to areas where it can be most productive. The union argues that capital possesses no such right, but must stay put because the worker has a vested interest in the job. This vested interest must not be jeopardized even if the conditions should threaten bankruptcy. To be sure, the union does not question the right of the worker to leave his job, to seek his fortune in some other part of the country. But the owners of capital have no such right of mobility — the union claims.

The reason for the flight of capital, says the union, is the lower wage rates prevailing in the selected areas. Even if this were so, the flight would be justified, socially: the lower rates should make hats cheaper, thus giving the hat wearer a break and enabling the company to employ more labor. But, it so happens that the lower wage rates do not always make for lower manufacturing costs. Low paid labor produces less than skilled labor; and therefore, the unit cost of production does not diminish. Besides, there is the cost of teaching unskilled labor in these new locations and the cost of labor turnover until an efficient team can be built; and when that point is reached, the wage rates automatically rise.

Why, then, do companies move their plants? Several considerations may govern their decision. But, as far as the union is concerned, the principal advantage to the company is that in the new location it can operate free from feather bedding and union interference in the management of the business; that is a big saving in costs, and more than offsets the expense and the trouble of moving.

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